

Notice of Meeting

Buckinghamshire County Council and Surrey County Council Joint Trading Standards Service Committee

**Date & time**

Thursday, 1 October
2015 at 11.00 am

Place

Room 8, 2nd Floor,
Judges Lodgings,
Walton Street,
Aylesbury, Bucks,
HP20 1US.

Contact

Andrew Baird
Room 122, County Hall,
Tel 020 8541 7609
andrew.baird@surreycc.gov.uk

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This meeting will be held in public. If you would like to attend and you have any special requirements, please contact Andrew Baird on 020 8541 7609.

Members of the Committee

Mr Richard Walsh (Surrey County Council) and Councillor Martin Phillips (Buckinghamshire County Council)

Advisory Members:

Mrs Kay Hammond (Surrey County Council) and Councillor Margaret Aston (Buckinghamshire County Council)

AGENDA

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 1 APRIL 2015

(Pages 1
- 6)

To agree the minutes of the previous meeting.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests from Members in respect of any item to be considered at the meeting.

4 PROCEDURAL ITEMS

4a Members' Questions

The deadline for Member's questions is 12pm four working days before the meeting (25 September 2015).

4b Public Questions

The deadline for public questions is seven days before the meeting (24 September 2015).

5 PETITIONS

The deadline for petitions was 14 days before the meeting.

6 PROGRESS UPDATE

(Pages 7
- 16)

The new Joint Trading Standards Service for Buckinghamshire and Surrey was launched on 1 April this year. The new service is able to provide a better service for residents and businesses in both counties whilst at the same time making efficiency savings and increasing income generation.

This report summarises the progress made in the first six months of the new service. It invites the Joint Committee to note the progress made, and to identify any issues which they would want to explore in more detail at future meetings of the Joint Committee.

The report also updates the Joint Committee on the range of national reviews currently underway looking at the future of the Trading Standards service and on how it contributes to both local government and central government priorities. It invites the Joint Committee to contribute to those reviews.

7 PERFORMANCE UPDATE

(Pages
17 - 24)

The Trading Standards Joint Management Committee is asked to note performance of the Service since its inception in April 2015 and to agree any corrective action that it feels is required. The information provided covers performance against the: 6 high level agreed indicators; delivery of the benefits anticipated in the Business Case; and in relation to the service

budget.

The information provided shows that:

- Overall performance against the 6 high level indicators is on target.
- All savings, income and efficiencies anticipated in the Business Case are on target to be delivered. There is more work required to deliver the expected service enhancement around volunteering.

It is projected that the budget will breakeven at outturn, achieving all the savings projected in the business case for the shared service.

8 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting is to be agreed.

David McNulty
Chief Executive

Published: 23 September 2015

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Thank you for your co-operation

MINUTES of the meeting of the **BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL AND SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL JOINT TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE COMMITTEE** held at 2.30 pm on 1 April 2015 at Council Chamber, Mole Valley District Council (MVDC), Pippbrook, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 1SJ.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Wednesday, 7 October 2015.

Elected Members:

- * Councillor Martin Phillips
- * Mrs Helyn Clack

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]

No apologies or substitutions were received.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 2]

No Declarations of Interest were received.

3 PROCEDURAL ITEMS [Item 3]

4 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS [Item 3a]

No Member questions were received.

5 PUBLIC QUESTIONS [Item 3b]

No public questions were received.

6 PETITIONS [Item 4]

No petitions were received.

7 TERMS OF REFERENCE AND SCHEME OF DELEGATION FOR OFFICERS [Item 5]

Witnesses:

Steve Ruddy, Head of Trading Standards

Amanda Poole, Assistant Head of Trading Standards

Lee Ormandy, Legal and Governance Manager

Phil Dart, Service Director, Buckinghamshire County Council

Yvonne Rees, Customer and Communities Strategic Director, Surrey County Council

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Head of Trading Standards introduced the report and noted that the meeting was the first meeting of the Joint Trading Standards Committee. He informed the Committee that the legal framework of the new service would be based on the delegation of decisions to the Committee. He added that the new service would build on the strengths of both authorities. Both local authorities had agreed to delegate their Trading Standards functions to the new Joint Committee. In turn the Joint Committee needed to delegate the Trading Standards responsibilities to the new joint service and the identified officers
2. An Advisory Member queried the Committee's membership, particularly when one of the two voting members gives apologies.

Officers responded that a Cabinet Member from the relevant authority would be required to attend in order to vote in the event of an apology.

3. The Committee were informed that the Trading Standards Board would meet quarterly and that the service would be subject to scrutiny within Surrey and Buckinghamshire's current Select Committee structure. The Trading Standards Joint Service Committee would meet every six months and alternate locations between Surrey and Buckinghamshire. Positive and regular engagement with a variety of Members would be encouraged.

RESOLVED:

- That the Committee approves the Scheme of Delegation as detailed in the report
- That the Committee approves the draft Terms of Reference as detailed in the submitted report

Action/further information to be provided:

None.

8 A NEW JOINT TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE - PRIORITIES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES [Item 6]

Witnesses:

Steve Ruddy, Head of Trading Standards

Amanda Poole, Assistant Head of Trading Standards

Lee Ormandy, Legal and Governance Manager

Phil Dart, Service Director, Buckinghamshire County Council

Yvonne Rees, Customer and Communities Strategic Director, Surrey County Council

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Head of Trading Standards introduced the report and expressed that the nature of crime is changing which means Trading Standards must also change to tackle this, he added that the merging of the two authorities ensures greater resilience, an enhanced profile, expertise sharing and greater opportunities to generate income. The Committee were informed that the new vision and service priorities reflect both Counties own priorities which include protection, economic prosperity, health and wellbeing and customer focus. It was noted that the services priorities comply with the respective corporate strategies as this was thoroughly considered.
2. The Committee were informed that the joint service was undertaking the use of intelligence to clamp down on rogue traders and use preventative strategies. Greater use of social media was being used to support this. Support for local business was also being increased and an increase of Primary Authority Partnerships (PAPs) had already occurred as a direct result of the new Joint Service.

3. Officers informed the Committee that the two areas that had not yet had performance monitoring measures implemented were customer service and innovation. The customer service element focused much around the service being accessible, these would be developed in time.
4. There was a discussion around income generation, the Committee were informed that this relates largely to the expansion of services for businesses, in particular increasing the number of PAP's.
5. Officers gave the Committee an overview of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) and explained that it regulates how authorities use investigative tools and tackle fraudulent traders and scams where individuals often take steps to try to hide their identity. Each local authority needed to have its own policies and procedures for using RIPA and this would continue in future. Where RIPA is to be used by the joint service it will first be approved centrally at a senior level within the service and then be subject to the systems and procedures in Buckinghamshire or Surrey as appropriate. All RIPA requests also need to be approved in advance by the Magistrates Court. In addition members scrutinise RIPA related activity regularly in both local authorities and both are also subject to external inspection and scrutiny. The most recent inspection of Surrey by the Surveillance Commissioner was very positive about the use of RIPA within the authority. Further training on RIPA for officers in the new joint service would take place later on in the month.
6. The Committee congratulated officers in Trading Standards on the good and timely work completed for the merger and added the service could now cope better when faced with a crisis.

RESOLVED:

- The Committee considered and noted the reasons for the creation of the shared service and the benefits that will be delivered by the new service
- The Committee considered and endorsed the new service priorities detailed in the report and the new service performance measures detailed in the report

Action/further information to be provided:

None.

9 ENFORCEMENT POLICY AND SERVICE CRITERIA - UPDATED FRAMEWORK [Item 7]

Witnesses:

Steve Ruddy, Head of Trading Standards

Amanda Poole, Assistant Head of Trading Standards

Lee Ormandy, Legal and Governance Manager

Phil Dart, Service Director, Buckinghamshire County Council

Yvonne Rees, Customer and Communities Strategic Director, Surrey County Council

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Legal and Governance Manager introduced the report and informed the Committee that the Enforcement Policy provides an updated framework setting out how business and others will be regulated in a fair and consistent manner. He added that the service criteria includes a risk matrix analysis to prioritise and assess service demand.
2. The Committee queried the relationship with the respective policing areas and it was responded that local relationships and partnerships with the police were currently very positive. In Buckinghamshire the Trading Standards team includes a seconded serving Police officer and this would continue in the new joint service. The new service will continue to work closely with the respective Police services. Current multi agency enforcement group membership would be unaffected.
3. The Committee discussed the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and noted that any amendments would detail a positive impact. A question was raised regarding the Care Act and if this would affect carers in respect to the EIA, the Legal and Governance Manager agreed to review this.

RESOLVED:

- The Committee endorsed the updated Enforcement Policy and Service Criteria

Action/further information to be provided:

- The Legal and Governance Manager agreed to investigate whether the Care Act had any implications for carers in the submitted Equality Impact Assessment.

10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING [Item 8]

The date of the next Trading Standards Joint Committee that will be held at Buckinghamshire County Council is to be confirmed.

Meeting ended at: 3.25 pm

Chairman

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**BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL AND
SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**

TRADING STANDARDS JOINT COMMITTEE

DATE: 1 OCTOBER 2015

**LEAD OFFICER: STEVE RUDDY
HEAD OF TRADING STANDARDS**

**SUBJECT: THE NEW JOINT TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE
UPDATE ON PROGRESS**

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

The new Joint Trading Standards Service for Buckinghamshire and Surrey was launched on 1 April this year. The new Service is able to provide better outcomes for residents and businesses in both counties whilst at the same time making efficiency savings and increasing income generation.

This report summarises the progress made in the first six months of the new Service. It invites the Joint Committee to note the progress made, and to identify any issues which they would want to explore in more detail at future meetings of the Joint Committee.

The report also updates the Joint Committee on the range of national reviews currently underway looking at the future of the Trading Standards Service and on how it contributes to both local government and central government priorities. It invites the Joint Committee to contribute to those reviews.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that:

- The Trading Standards Joint Committee note this report and identify any issues they would like to consider in more detail at future meetings.
- The Trading Standards Joint Committee considers the reviews of Trading Standards currently underway and determines how it wishes to contribute. A draft response is included as Annex 1 for consideration, endorsement or amendment.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Joint Committee has a responsibility to provide strategic leadership and direction, effective governance and oversight of the joint service.

DETAILS:

BACKGROUND

1. From 1 April 2015, Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC) and Surrey County Council (SCC) have operated a Joint Trading Standards Service. The transition to the new Service was successful and the initial IT connectivity issues have been fully resolved. The Service staff remain based in Redhill and Aylesbury, ensuring a strong local presence in each county.
2. The new service management team is working well together and delivering the benefits anticipated in the business case for the new Service. A separate report on this agenda summarises progress against the agreed performance measures for the Service and against the expectations of the business case for the shared service.
3. All decision and actions by staff are made with regard to the agreed service vision and priorities.

VISION

“Buckinghamshire and Surrey Trading Standards working together to protect our communities, delivering excellent public services, locally trusted and nationally recognised.”

PRIORITIES

4. The new Service is already achieving successes under each of these shared service priorities:
 - **Protection: protecting individuals, communities and businesses from harm and financial loss**
 - **Economic Prosperity: Helping businesses to thrive and supporting growth**
 - **Improving Health and Wellbeing**
 - **Innovation**
 - **Customer Focus / Resident Experience**
5. Protection
 - 5.1. This is a central priority for the new Service. In April the new Joint Committee agreed a new joint Enforcement and Investigation policy. The vulnerability and impact on victims is a key consideration in determining which cases require further investigation by the Service. There have been several major prosecution cases in the first few months of the Service and the investigation case load continues to increase.
 - 5.2. The Service has taken an active part in Scams Awareness month and are working closely with the national Scams Hub team with one of our officers seconded to that team.

- 5.3. Examples of successful cases concluded in the last six months include the case a serial rogue trader who targeted elderly and vulnerable residents and defrauded them of over £100,000 was sentenced to three years imprisonment for fraud and money laundering. He charged extortionate sums for repairs to roofs and drains. He preyed on elderly people, using lies and emotional blackmail to gain their sympathy and even drove some victims to the bank to ensure they withdrew funds. At least nine victims were conned out of £104,000, including an 89-year-old war veteran who was cheated out of more than £42,000 making him overdrawn for the first time in his life.
 - 5.4. In another case an importer of fake DVDs, who ignored several warnings to stop importing fakes from China, conning customers, undermining legitimate local businesses and defrauding HMRC, was convicted and jailed. As well as a prison sentence he has been ordered to pay £500,000 under the Proceeds of Crime legislation and his assets are restrained by the Courts until he does so.
 - 5.5. One case in particular demonstrated how the Service protects the most vulnerable. A designer, importer and retailer of a highly dangerous cot-bed was convicted of consumer safety offences after two extremely close near misses where young children were very nearly killed by the potentially deadly cot-bed.
 - 5.6. The shared service, working closely with the communications teams in both local authorities, has helped maximise the impact and coverage of these cases, and others. They have generated significantly more coverage than would have been the case for either service operating alone.
 - 5.7. The new Service, through combining legal and investigative resources and expertise is enhancing our ability to tackle consumer problems and rogue traders.
6. Economic Prosperity
- 6.1 The new shared service has also continued to enhance the services we are providing for our businesses.
 - 6.2 Our Primary Authority Partnerships (PAPs) with businesses such as British Gas, Toyota, Shell, Esso, Toshiba, Dairy Crest, Premier Foods etc continue to grow. Several of these are with trade associations ensuring we are also supporting small businesses. The partnership with the Association of Convenience Stores alone enables assured advice to be provided to 30,000 businesses.
 - 6.3 Being in a PAP helps business manage relationships with hundred or regulators and local authorities across the UK. It simplifies the regulatory process, reducing the burden on businesses and cutting the cost of compliance. Therefore it provides businesses with an assurance of consistency and greater confidence.
 - 6.4 Our innovative approach also enables the Service to be the single point of contact for businesses seeking advice on a wide range of issues including Trading Standards, Health and Safety, Environmental Health and Fire Safety. Our business focused approach has helped see this area of work grow from 42 partnerships to 67 in the last six months, with more on the way.

6.5 Several major businesses, including Waitrose and Pfizer, have chosen to work with the Service rather than other providers specifically because of the strengths of the new shared service.

7 Improving Health and Wellbeing

7.1 We are working in partnership with Public Health on a range of initiatives. The Eat Out Eat Well award for restaurants and caterers who offer healthier options continues to grow and there are now 293 businesses involved.

7.2 A new joint Food Plan for the Service has been agreed which brings together the resources and expertise from both counties to focus on tackling issues of highest risk.

7.3 The Service has worked in both counties to successfully tackle retailers of Novel Psychoactive Substances (“legal highs”). Despite the complexity of the legislation, and in advance of the new legal ban we have successfully disrupted the local supply from the known retail premises in both counties.

7.4 The Services continues to tackle problems of illegal sales of alcohol and tobacco to young people and to tackle the supply of illicit tobacco, utilising sniffer dogs in both counties to identify and seize illegal tobacco.

8 Innovation

8.1 By bringing together our legal functions the Service has improved and streamlined our legal work enabling us to speed up cases and to reduce costs by working together.

8.2 By working with a private sector partner (Checktrade) the number of business who are Trading Standards approved has rapidly expanded. This approach starting in Surrey is now expanding to Buckinghamshire. This will help increased choice for residents and help improve compliance with a much higher number of businesses at no cost.

9 Customer Focus / Resident Wellbeing

9.1 Bringing together both services has enabled a more detail look at a much higher number of complaints and attempt to resolve an issue before it becomes a more complex investigation. This triage approach ensures a greater focus on the needs of residents.

9.2 The Service has increased the reach of its preventative work, in particular by expanding the reach of social media and the TSA! Newsletter which now goes out across both areas.

9.3 There is a plan to increase the number and impact of volunteers in the second half of the year.

9.4 The use of Accredited Financial Investigators and Proceeds of Crime legislation means the Service can recoup money to help compensate victims of crime. Working together as part of a larger specialist team has enhanced capacity in this respect.

NATIONAL SCRUTINY OF THE DELIVERY OF TRADING STANDARDS

- 10 There have been a range of developments nationally during the time that the Bucks and Surrey Joint Service was being developed.
- 11 In June The Chartered Trading Standards Institute published a Vision for the future of Trading Standards. The vision identified a range of problems with the delivery of Trading Standards services, arguing that nationally the current model of delivery was broken following significant cuts to Trading Standards and called on government to commission detailed work on the future of the Service including reviewing the model for the delivery of Trading Standards services.
- 12 In June the Chancellor's Productivity Plan was published immediately after the Budget. In that he announced a review of Trading Standards "to ensure that consumer enforcement capability effectively supports competition and better regulation objectives". The review, being led by BIS will consider efficiency and financial sustainability for Trading Standards. It aims to better define the Governments expectations of Trading Standards. It will examine Trading Standards ability to meet the demands placed on it by central and local government and what could help its delivery and impact, including delivery models and the scope for better regulation.
- 13 In July the Local Government Association (LGA) announced their own review to examine the future of Trading Standards. The objectives of the LGA review are:
 - "On the basis of political and senior managerial input from across local government, analyse what local government needs from its trading standards service, with reference to both the current state of the service in England and what it can be reasonably be expected to deliver in the context of further funding reductions.
 - Subsequently explore and assess the options for the future of the service, with a view to outlining a series of recommended next steps to further explore and take forward."
- 14 The National Audit Office (NAO) will also be undertaking a review of the wider consumer protection landscape and will report next year.
- 15 Both the BIS and LGA reviews are gathering evidence now and will report in the autumn.
- 16 Yvonne Rees, Strategic Director for Customers and Communities at SCC has been nominated to a Stakeholder Panel as part of the LGA review. The Panel is due to meet in October.
- 17 The Joint Committee is invited to express its views on the current reviews underway and to consider how it wishes to respond. A draft response is included as Annex 1. The Joint Committee is asked to consider the draft and endorse or amend it as appropriate and determine how it wishes to make its voice heard.

CONSULTATION:

The Joint Trading Standards Board has previously been consulted on the current reviews of the Trading Standards Service and has expressed a view that the Service is an important part of local government and it should remain so.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

The Inter Authority Agreement deals with risk management issues and there are no additional risk management issues arising from this report.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

The Joint Service is on target to deliver the financial benefits set out and agreed in the business case

Legal Implications

The Inter-Authority Agreement completed by Buckinghamshire and Surrey County Councils prior to the launch of the Service in April provides the legal framework within which the Service is operating. This is working effectively and there is no current need to amend this in any way. Managers in the Service will continue to keep this under review.

The report makes a number of references to relevant legal processes and proceedings that the Service has been involved in over the last six months, but there are no other specific legal issues that need to be drawn to the attention of the Committee.

Equalities and Diversity

Equalities and Diversity issues were considered fully in the process of creating the joint service and the associated business case includes an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA). This report does not change any of the considerations included in the business case or in that EIA.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

1. If the Joint Committee identifies requests any further reports on the issues raised then they will be brought to the next meeting.
2. The views of the Joint Committee on the Trading Standards Service reviews will be communicated to the review teams as appropriate.

Contact Officer:

Steve Ruddy, Head of Trading Standards - 01372 371730

Consulted:

Phil Dart, Director Communities, Bucks CC

Yvonne Rees, Strategic Director Customer & Communities, SCC

Allan Wells, Lead Manager of Legal Services, SCC

Susan Smyth, Strategic Finance manager, SCC

Annexes:

Annex 1: Draft response: The reviews of the delivery of Trading Standards

Sources/background papers:

None

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Draft response: The reviews of the delivery of Trading Standards

Buckinghamshire and Surrey County Councils have created a new shared Trading Standards service. The service is overseen by a Joint Committee where both Councils are represented by the relevant Cabinet member.

The Joint Committee has discussed the reviews of Trading Standards that are currently being undertaken. We welcome the recognition of the significance and impact of the Trading Standards service in protecting residents and in supporting businesses. This is a central priority for us in Buckinghamshire and in Surrey.

We are however concerned about the number of different reviews currently running in parallel. We believe that the reviews need to work together to reach a common understanding of the issues. That way they are more likely to deliver results which will be supported by both central and local government, and which will improve the impact of the service and hence the outcomes for local residents and businesses.

We recognise the picture of significant reductions in resources over recent years, outlined in recent work from CTSI, and the increasing postcode lottery of service provision in some parts of the country. We don't believe that provides any reason to consider alternative delivery models outside of local government.

We believe that it is vital that the Trading Standards Service remains part of local government. It makes a major contribution to delivering local priorities, in protecting residents and supporting local businesses. In doing so it achieves much more than it otherwise could by being part of the network of local government services.

Our own model, creating a new shared service, is one part of the solution to the current issues facing the service nationally. We have brought together two successful teams to ensure we can continue to provide excellent services whilst also meeting the financial challenges that face us.

Central and local government should support the creation of more shared Trading Standards services, creating a network of strategic services across the UK and in all regions. This can build on the network of shared services that already exist.

Government and local authorities should work together to explore ways to better encourage, practically support, and incentivise the creation of shared Trading Standards services.

In addition, in order to help address variations in service delivery or the potential for enforcement gaps, we believe that Government should build upon existing commissioning approaches. It should use both National Trading Standards and the regional Trading Standards co-ordinating groups, to channel resources to tackle any particular issues of national concern. This has already proved successful in areas such as animal feed, and in relation to tobacco control, and has scope to be developed further into other key policy areas for central government.

Richard Walsh - Cabinet Member for Localities and Community Wellbeing, Surrey
Martin Philips - Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Public Health, Buckinghamshire.

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BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL AND SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

TRADING STANDARDS JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

DATE: 1 OCTOBER 2015

**LEAD OFFICER: AMANDA POOLE
ASSISTANT HEAD OF TRADING STANDARDS**

SUBJECT: PERFORMANCE UPDATE

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

The Buckinghamshire County Council and Surrey County Council Joint Trading Standards Services Committee is asked to note the performance of the Service since its inception in April 2015 and to agree any corrective action that it feels is required. The information provided covers performance against the six high level agreed indicators, delivery of the benefits anticipated in the business case and in relation to the service budget.

The information provided shows that:

- Overall performance against the six high level indicators is on target.
- All savings, income and efficiencies anticipated in the business case are on target to be delivered. There is more work required to deliver the expected service enhancement around volunteering.
- It is projected that the budget will breakeven at outturn, achieving all the savings projected in the business case for the shared service.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that The Trading Standards Joint Committee note the Service's performance and consider any corrective actions it feels necessary.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Joint Committee is required by the Inter Authority Agreement which underpins the service to:
 - Ensure effective performance of the Service. This includes formally reviewing performance annually by considering performance against the agreed measures.
 - Maintain financial oversight of the Service and ensure sound financial management.

-
- Monitor delivery of the business case including delivery of savings and additional income.

DETAILS:

Background

2. The six high level performance indicators (PIs) for the Service were agreed by the Project Board prior to the start of this financial year and are in the Inter Authority Agreement signed by both partners. In future years the high level PIs will be agreed by the Joint Committee at its spring 2015 meeting.
3. The high level PIs are supplemented by a range of management PIs which are reviewed within individual teams and/or at management team meetings.
4. The Business Case, including anticipated benefits, was agreed by the Cabinets of both Surrey County Council (SCC) and Buckinghamshire County Council in October 2014.
5. The Inter Authority Agreement sets out the level of contribution to the budget by each partner. The business case includes the budget for the Service in 2015/16 and for the following three years. In future, the Joint Committee will finalise and agree any amendments to the Service's budget for coming years at the spring 2016 meeting.

Performance Indicator 1: Increase the financial savings for residents as a result of our interventions and investigations. – On Target

6. There remains a significant amount of work to do within the Service to consistently and robustly record information which feeds this indicator. This work is underway and requires changes to how work is recorded to ensure it is recorded consistently and the result is accurate and robust.
7. In time this indicator will include:
 - redress obtained for consumers or by consumers with the Service's assistance;
 - other savings made by residents as a result of our intervention, e.g. not sending money in response to a scam attempt;
 - compensation awarded by the Courts to victims of crimes which have been investigated / prosecuted by the Service;
 - the proportion of Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) confiscation orders which the Service is entitled to (currently around 30% of the total amount).
8. A significant POCA confiscation order earlier this year means that total savings are already more than what was achieved last year.

13. The POCA confiscation order was for a total of £500,000. Under the Home Office's asset recovery incentivisation scheme the Service will receive around £165,000 of this once assets are liquidated. The order was made against an individual that the Service had prosecuted for importing and selling counterfeit goods on a large scale.

Performance Indicator 2: Protect residents by stopping rogue traders operating in Buckinghamshire and Surrey. – On Target

14. The Service continues to investigate and, where appropriate prosecute, rogue traders. Since April a total of nine years and 11 months of prison sentences have been given to rogue traders and money launderers who were investigated and prosecuted by the service. Other cases led to sentences including 250 hours unpaid work and an additional 22 months of suspended prison sentences.
15. An example of one such case was doorstep crime perpetrated against two vulnerable victims, one in Buckinghamshire the other in West Berkshire. The case came to our attention when one of the victims went to his bank for a loan, after having paid all of his life savings (around £70,000) to rogue traders for unnecessary and vastly overpriced work on his house. The bank manager alerted Trading Standards and the Service then investigated. Through the investigation four individuals were identified as being involved, either directly in the fraud or by laundering the money on behalf of the direct perpetrators and all either pleaded guilty or were found guilty upon trial.
16. In another case, a Surrey landscape gardener who preyed on elderly and vulnerable victims who were unable to look after their own gardens was convicted of several fraud and money laundering offences. Customers complained that queries about price or the standard of work led to threats, verbal abuse and aggression. In one case, a woman in her 90s was charged £24,500 for work worth only £400. In another case, a man was charged £17,000 for work valued at £200. In total, in relation to eight different cases, over £665,000 was defrauded from elderly and vulnerable victims.
17. Prison sentences and positive media coverage of court case results helps act as a deterrent to those considering taking part in such criminality and media coverage has been strong, with local, national and international coverage of cases since April spanning the press, social media, radio and TV.
18. In addition to investigating crimes which have occurred, the Service uses a number of initiatives to prevent victimisation and re-victimisation by rogue traders. These include the use of door stickers and overt CCTV cameras at the doorstep. We are also developing the use of "cocooning" packs to reduce the opportunity for rogue traders to target multiple households in a close area.
19. The Service has also been active in other areas where vulnerable people may be susceptible to manipulation or fraud. In one example where there was information that a product was being sold as a miracle cure for Cancer (as well as Ebola, HIV, Malaria and Autism) the Service took immediate action to ensure that potential victims were alerted and that a potentially unsafe product could not be sold.

Performance Indicator 3: Prevent residents becoming victims through expanding the use and reach of social media alerts, TS Alert, volunteers, and other preventative initiatives to raise awareness of scams, rogue traders and unsafe products. – On Target

20. TS Alert average distribution has slightly increased from 2226 to 2241. Facebook likes have increased from 463 to 500; Clicks (from 1300 to 1500) and impressions (from 9,957 to 13,340) on twitter have increased.
21. Use of volunteers is now strong in the Bucks area, with around 60 volunteers regularly involved with the Service. However, the development of volunteers in the Surrey area has been slow to get going. The management team have agreed that additional resource will be dedicated to developing this area and it will be a significant area of focus over the coming months.
22. As mentioned in relation to PI 2, there has been significant media coverage of court cases since April, including coverage in national newspapers, radio and TV, most recently with primetime coverage on BBC1 on The One Show.
23. Participation in Scams Awareness month in July focused on highlighting the links between susceptibility to fraud and scams with increasing levels of cognitive impairment (notably dementia) and taking a multi agency approach to creating communities who look out for their most vulnerable members.

Performance Indicator 4: Increase the number of Primary Authority Partnerships (PAP's) – On Target

24. From a baseline of 41, the Service now has 67 Primary Authority Partnerships (PAPs), including seven coordinated PAPs. Coordinated PAPs are with membership organisations such as the Association of Convenience Stores. This means that assured advice given under these partnerships reaches a large number of individual traders.
25. Some companies have specifically cited the Service's breadth and depth of expertise and knowledge as their reason for entering into a PAP.
26. The minimum income currently projected from PAPs in 15-16 is £100,000. It should be noted that this amount is not 'profit' (there are strict rules about what can be charged to businesses for assured advice) but is income which allows the Service to cover the cost of this provision. This approach supports business and the economy and enhances overall compliance, at no cost to the Service. The amount given excludes Pay As You Go hours not yet undertaken & likely income from businesses currently in negotiation with the Service for a PAP. This income compares to a total of approximately £93,000 last year.

Performance Indicator 5: Increase the membership of trader approval schemes – On Target

27. 293 businesses are now "Eat Out Eat Well" approved by the Service. This number is steadily growing and is supported by the public health teams at both SCC and BCC due to strong links to the healthy eating Public Health agenda.
28. 2371 businesses are in Bucks & Surrey Trading Standards Approved trader approval schemes (representing a step change from 518 businesses before

the start of this year). Surrey businesses were offered TS Approved Checkatrade membership from 1 April; this service has been available to Bucks based businesses since September.

Performance Indicator 6: Work with partners to tackle illegal sales of age restricted products; and to explore new ways to reduce harm from the use and consumption of unsafe products; and, poor food quality and nutrition. – On Target

29. Five food projects are now underway covering areas such as allergen issues in catering establishments and food traceability.
30. Links with Public Health colleagues in both Buckinghamshire and Surrey are being strengthened in the context of the changing legislation relating to tobacco products and e-cigarettes.
31. Work with Public Health colleagues in Surrey and Buckinghamshire and the DAAT team in Buckinghamshire is ongoing to develop a strategy to deal with new psychoactive substances (NPS), as well as operationally disrupting the supply of NPS from local shops. Trading Standards are awaiting the new specific legislation which will prohibit the sale of NPS.

Business Case Benefits

32. Financial Savings are well on track to be delivered and many have already been made. For example, by moving both APP databases onto one server (saving the costs of a replacement server that was overdue); joint purchasing of products accessed through the internet which enable officers to carry out their roles efficiently, such as access to up to date legislation, case law and guidance notes; sharing testing and metrological equipment, saving on the costs of calibrating two sets of equipment.
33. Income generation opportunities are also being capitalised on to generate the anticipated income. There is a single business charging policy in place across the service, and more detail around PAP income is given above. The Service will be a host for one of three funded regional posts to deliver animal feed work.
34. In terms of efficiencies, examples show that the Service is progressing well on aligning policies and planning; social media (Twitter, Facebook, TS Alerts) all now go out from one source; and the media teams have been working well together to maximise media coverage without the need for duplication of effort.
35. As mentioned earlier, there is more work required to deliver the expected service enhancement around volunteering, particularly in the Surrey area. A number of suggestions have been made as to how it might be possible to link into other volunteers already in place at SCC and we are optimistic that with additional resources, the Service will be able to make rapid progress with this area.
36. We are working to enhance the Service locally and the profession more widely by making a strong commitment to training – both with additional trainee posts (where the individual is undertaking professional qualifications) and through apprentices, where we are working to develop an innovative Trading Standards specific apprenticeship. In the past, the closest linked

apprenticeship NVQ's have been Business & Administration or Customer Services.

Budget

37. It is projected that the budget will breakeven at outturn. A number of vacancies were held going into the Joint Service and in the first few months, until the management team could see more clearly what roles would be required in the medium/longer term. A number of roles have now been identified and recruitment is underway now.
38. There is a need over the next six months to ensure that we appropriately resource further work to help develop and deliver our growth strategy – both in terms of income generation and in enhancing or expanding the partnership.

CONSULTATION:

39. The Trading Standards Joint Management Board have been consulted on current performance.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

40. There is a small risk of poor reputation if the Service were to fail to deliver on developing its use of volunteers. This will be monitored by the management team.
41. All significant risks affecting the service (which include items beyond budget and performance) are considered by the management team each quarter.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

42. The Service is delivering the business case and is not anticipating an overspend.
43. The Service is aware of the need to make further savings and is actively considering invest to save pieces of work.

Legal Implications

44. The Inter-Authority Agreement completed by Buckinghamshire and Surrey County Councils prior to the launch of the Service in April provides the legal framework within which the Service is operating. This is working effectively and there is no current need to amend this in any way. Managers in the Service will continue to keep this under review.
45. The report makes a number of references to relevant legal processes and proceedings that the Service has been involved in over the last six months, and there are no other specific legal issues that need to be drawn to the attention of the Committee.

Equalities and Diversity

46. The performance being reported will not impact on residents or staff with different protected characteristics, as such an Equality Impact Assessment has not been included.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

47. Performance continues to be reviewed by the Service Management team and by the Joint Service Board.

Contact Officer:

Mrs Amanda Poole, Assistant Head of Trading Standards	01296 388770
Mr Steve Ruddy, Head of Trading Standards	01372 371730

Consulted:

Martin Phillips, Cabinet Member, Bucks CC
Richard Walsh, Cabinet Member, Surrey CC
Phil Dart, Director Communities, Bucks CC
Yvonne Rees, Strategic Director Customer & Communities, Surrey CC
Allan Wells, Lead Manager - Legal Services, Surrey County Council - 020 8541 7122
Susan Smyth, Strategic Finance Manager, - 020 8541 7588

Annexes:

None

Sources/background papers:

None

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